

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

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LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, MNUC, AR

SUBJECT: ARGENTINES TO RATIFY TREATY OF TLATELOLCO

SUMMARY. ACTING ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM HIS GOVERNMENT, ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR AJA ESPIL NOTIFIED DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS ON MARCH 22 THAT ARGENTINA HAS EVERY INTENTION OF RATIFYING THE TREATY OF TLATELOLCO, AS PRESIDENT VIDELA COMMITTED HIS COUNTRY TO DO IN CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT CARTER AND SECRETARY VANCE. THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT THIS WELCOME DEVELOPMENT WOULD TAKE PLACE SOON, NOTING THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD HAVE NO DOUBT ABOUT ARGENTINA'S INTENTIONS. OTHER ASPECTS OF U.S.-ARGENTINE NUCLEAR COOPERATION WERE ALSO REVIEWED, INCLUDING CONDITIONS FOR THE POSSIBLE PROVISION OF HEAVY
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WATER TECHNOLOGY. END SUMMARY.

1. AT HIS REQUEST, ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR AJA ESPIL CALLED ON DR. JOSEPH NYE, DEPUTY TO THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR SECURITY ASSISTANCE, ON MARCH 22. MR. VAN DOREN OF ACDA WAS ALSO PRESENT.

2. AJA ESPIL SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WANTED THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT TO KNOW THAT ARGENTINA IS WORKING ON

PROCESS OF RATIFYING THE TREATY OF TLATELOLCO. "THERE IS NO DOUBT OF THAT," AJA ESPIL DECLARED. THE AMBASSADOR STATED THAT THIS STEP HAD TWO PURPOSES: (1) TO FULFILL PRESIDENT VIDELA'S PROMISE TO PRESIDENT CARTER, AND (2) TO ENHANCE ARGENTINA'S OPPORTUNITIES FOR NUCLEAR POWER COOPERATION. AJA ESPIL REFERRED ALSO TO FOREIGN MINISTER MONTES' COMMITMENT TO SECRETARY VANCE ON TLATELOLCO. THE AMBASSADOR PREDICTED THAT RATIFICATION WOULD TAKE PLACE IN A "VERY SHORT TIME" BUT SAID HE COULD NOT BE MORE PRECISE.

3. THE AMBASSADOR TOUCHED ON THE U.S. OBLIGATION TO RATIFY PROTOCOL I OF TLATELOLCO BUT SAID THAT THIS WOULD NOT HOLD UP ARGENTINE ACTION. HE OBSERVED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT UNDERSTANDS THAT THE U.S. MUST FIRST RATIFY THE PANAMA TREATIES.

4. TURNING TO DIFFERENCES OVER THE INTERPRETATION OF THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE OF NOVEMBER 21, AJA ESPIL SAID THAT ARGENTINA BELIEVES THAT THE REFERENCES TO TECHNOLOGY IN THE COMMUNIQUE REFER PRIMARILY TO HEAVY WATER TECHNOLOGY TO BE PROVIDED IN RETURN FOR FULL-SCOPE SAFEGUARDS. DR. NYE REMINDED THE AMBASSADOR THAT THE CONFIDENTIAL

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U.S. TEAM, WHICH HELD CONVERSATIONS WITH ARGENTINE NUCLEAR OFFICIALS PRIOR TO THE ISSUANCE OF THE COMMUNIQUE, REPEATEDLY STRESSED THAT THE PROVISION OF HEAVY WATER TECHNOLOGY WOULD BE A DIFFICULT AND MAJOR STEP FOR THE UNITED STATES. THE U.S. WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO TAKE THE STEP UNLESS ARGENTINA TOOK SEVERAL PREVIOUS STEPS, INCLUDING FULL-SCOPE SAFEGUARDS AND A DEFERRAL OF RE-PROCESSING. THE AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE EASIER TO TALK ABOUT NUCLEAR COOPERATION AFTER ARGENTINA RATIFIES TLATELOLCO.

5. THE AMBASSADOR REFERRED TO BRAZIL SEVERAL TIMES. HE MENTIONED THE U.S. REQUIREMENT THAT A DEFERRAL OF RE-PROCESSING WOULD BE A CONDITION FOR HEAVY WATER TECHNOLOGY. THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT HE SUPPOSES WE WILL BE WORKING ON THIS MATTER WITH BRAZIL BECAUSE OF ARGENTINA'S INSISTENCE ON REGIONAL EQUILIBRIUM (I.E., BRAZILIAN DEFERRAL. (NYE SUGGESTED THAT THE ARGENTINES APPROACH THE BRAZILIANS ON THIS.) AJA ESPIL ALSO QUERIED US ABOUT THE TRANSFER OF FUEL FOR THE ANGRA I REACTOR IN BRAZIL, AND WE EXPLAINED THAT BRAZIL MET OUR EXISTING NON-PROLIFERATION REQUIREMENTS PRIOR TO THE TRANSFER,

INCLUDING A RIGHT OF CONSENT OVER THE REPRO-
CESSING OF AMERICAN FUEL.

6. DR. NYE STRONGLY WELCOMED ARGENTINA'S REITERATION OF ITS INTENTION TO RATIFY TLATELOLCO, COMMENTING THAT ACTION BEFORE THE MAY SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY HELPFUL. NYE REPEATED OUR INTENTION TO RATIFY PROTOCOL I AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. HE ALSO EXPRESSED OUR READINESS TO DISCUSS NUCLEAR CO-OPERATION. NYE POINTED TO THE CONCLUSION OF A QUAD-RILATERAL AGREEMENT FOR THE TRANSFER OF THE ZERO POWER REACTOR TO PERU, AND OUR DESIRE TO ASSIST ARGENTINA TO DEVELOP LOWER ENRICHED FUELS SO THAT THE SALE OF A 10 MW ARGENTINE REACTOR TO PERU MIGHT PROCEED. NYE
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REFERRED TO OUR WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER ARGENTINE MEMBERSHIP IN THE LONDON SUPPLIER'S GROUP WHEN FULL-SCOPE SAFEGUARDS ARE ACCEPTED, AT WHICH TIME IT WOULD ALSO BE POSSIBLE TO FURNISH HEAVY WATER OR RESEARCH REACTOR FUEL.

7. AJA ESPIL TOUCHED ON ARGENTINA'S FRUSTRATIONS IN SECURING HEAVY WATER, NOTWITHSTANDING THE 1969 AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION WHICH SPECIFICALLY MENTIONS THE PROVISION OF HEAVY WATER. DR. NYE EXPLAINED THAT NEW LEGISLATION REQUIRES US TO SEEK FULL-SCOPE SAFEGUARDS, AND THAT IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION WOULD LICENSE EXPORTS WITHOUT SUCH SAFEGUARDS.

8. AJA ESPIL REPEATED THAT HIS COUNTRY INTENDS TO RATIFY TLATELOLCO AS A MATTER OF POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND NOT IN TERMS OF SOME KIND OF TRADE. NONETHELESS, HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF ARGENTINA'S OBTAINING SOMETHING IN RETURN FOR THIS VERY DIFFICULT POLITICAL STEP WHICH IS OPPOSED BY ELEMENTS IN THE ARGENTINE NUCLEAR COMMISSION.

9. VAN DOREN REMINDED AMBASSADOR AJA ESPIL OF WHAT ARGENTINA TOLD US IN NOVEMBER CONCERNING ITS RATIFICATION. THE ARGENTINES SAID THAT THEY WOULD NOT WAIVE THE CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR THE TREATY TO ENTER INTO FORCE AND THAT THEY WOULD NOT RPT NOT MAKE A STATEMENT ON WHETHER OR NOT INDIGENOUS PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS ARE PERMITTED BY THE TREATY.
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